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ETHNOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF AFRICA

EDITED BY DARYLL FORDE

EAST CENTRAL AFRICA

PART VIII

THE SOUTHERN NILO-HAMITES

BY

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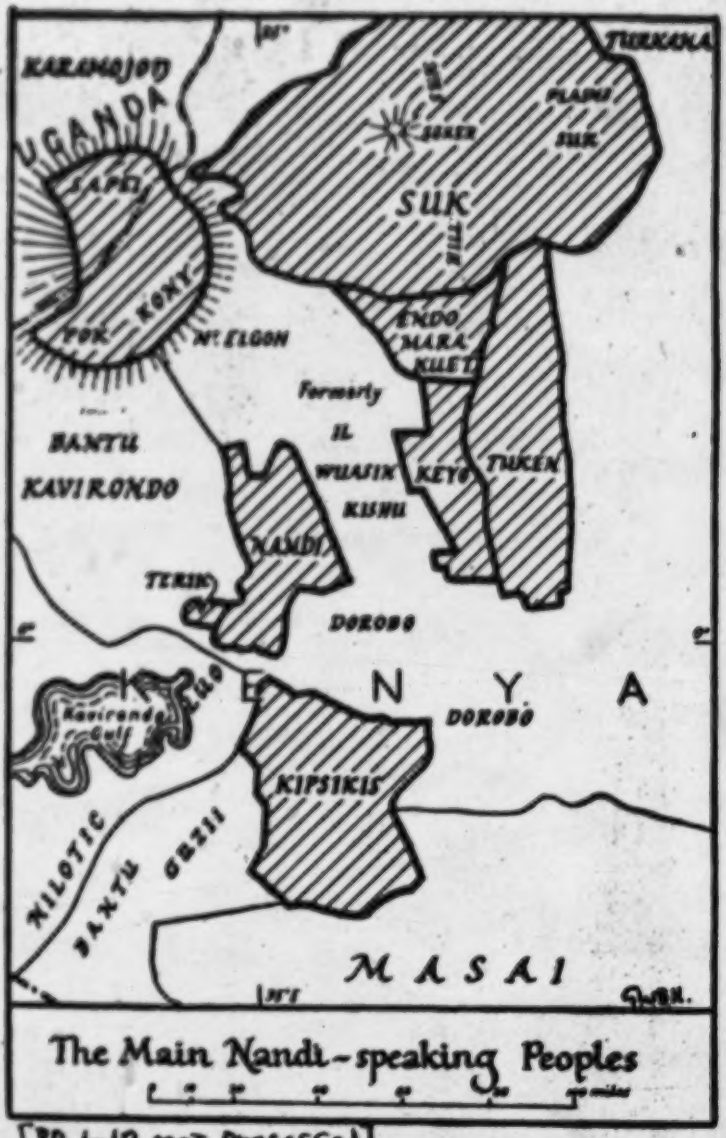

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THE DOROBO OF THE NORTH TINDIRET FOREST (KIPKURERER)

HISTORY

It is clear from traditions of the Nandi, Masai, and Kikuyu, as well as of the Dorobo themselves, that the Dorobo (whatever their origin) were living in the Kenya Highlands when the Nilo-Hamites and Bantu arrived there. Since most of the Dorobo hordes lived on land which under the British Administration became Native Reserves (Native Land Units), the land rights of these groups were secured as far as mere domicile was concerned. But the western Dorobo, including the Kipkurerek, occupied land which was excluded from Native Land Units and became mainly Forest Reserve: hence their land rights were not considered.

About 1927 the Government began to investigate the possibility of removing these Dorobo, largely on the grounds that occupation of Forest Reserves by unadministered natives was undesirable, and in 1937 the Kipkurerek, the principal horde involved, were transferred to the Nandi Land Unit. This move was not successful, for within a few months most if not all of those transferred had crept back to the edge of the North Tindiret forest, their old home, where they were living precariously when I did field-work among them in 1938–9.

DEMOGRAPHY

The Kipkurerek Dorobo of the western part of the North Tindiret Forest Reserve numbered 226 when I made a census of them in 1938–39. Since part of the horde was no longer, as formerly, living in the forest, it was found necessary to classify the people according to the nature of their domicile at that time, and this resulted in the distinction of four " domicile categories ":

A. Inside the forest, at an altitude of 8,000 ft. and over.

B. Farmland on the edge of the forest, mostly between 7,500 and 8,000 ft., and within a mile of the edge of the forest.

C. Farmland or Nandi Reserve (Land Unit) within 10 miles of the forest in natural conditions generally similar to B, but sometimes at a slightly lower altitude.

D. Distant areas, i.e., the Keyo and Kamasya Land Units, and Laikipia; in the first two there is country similar to A.

People classed under C and D were still considered to belong to the horde, and were regarded as members of their original districts (*koret*), and accordingly the census can be analysed (1) by districts, with domicile categories, and (2) by districts, according to sex and age:

(1)

Domicile category	Kipkorom	Soeuiyo	Kelpui	% of total	Totals
A	0	13	0	6	13
B	23	59	46	61	128
C	16	24	17	25	57
D	0	3	12	7	15
Unknown	0	3	0	1	3
	49	102	75	100	226

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(2)

Karet	Single men	Married men	Women	Male children	Female children	Total
Kipkoreon	6	6	15	10	10	49
Kaplyo	23	10	20	16	10	102
Kalpai	26	10	17	9	6	76
	55	44	80	35	34	228

SOURCE: Huntingford, 1929, 1942, 1951, and unpublished material. There are no other sources for the Kipkurerek Dorobo; and except in the case of the Kidog (p. 70 below) there is no material for a description of any other horde; nor are any other population figures available.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The North Tindiret Forest lies about five miles from the south-eastern boundary of the Nandi Land Unit, and rises from 7,000 ft. to over 9,000 ft. It consists of two great east–west ridges reaching an altitude of about 8,500 ft. divided by the deeply sunk river Kipkurere, "hollow (river)," the ridges merging some 12 miles from the western edge in the high ground round Timboroa which rises to over 9,000 ft. The region is dense evergreen "high forest," with trees of 100 ft. and over, and thick, impenetrable undergrowth growing to a height of 6 or 8 ft. The average rainfall on a farm two miles from the edge of the forest was 54.09 ins. over a period of nine years. Till within the last 25 years the Dorobo lived in small isolated settlements right inside the forest. Access was given by two parallel tracks across the south-western corner of the forest, and concealed paths branched off from them leading to the settlements. In addition to providing a permanent hofne, the forest was their wet-weather hunting ground; in dry weather the Dorobo used to hunt far afield over Nandi and the Uasin Gishu Plateau, and down to the Rift Valley. In 1937 they were removed from the forest, and a number of them (of domicile categories A and B) settled round the edge of the forest, along a narrow strip of grassland and bush that forms the upper edge of the farms which occupy the five-mile space between the forest and the Nandi Land Unit. But the intention of the Government had been to transfer the Dorobo to the Nandi Land Unit. This the Dorobo did not agree to, but their re-settlement along the edge of the forest was not officially accepted, and they lived there without legal rights unless they became squatters or casual labourers on the farms they settled on.

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY

Till disturbed by European settlement, the Dorobo had a purely hunting economy, though during the last 30 years they have been taking some interest in the acquisition of cattle and in small-scale cultivation. In their hunting days, their only livestock were bees and dogs.

HUNTING

The year was divided into two seasons, *muainonik*, the dry weather, when they hunted game of all sorts with bow and arrow both in the forest and much farther afield; and *isotet*, the wet weather, when they set traps in the forest. In the past they hunted buffalo and elephant, and lion were killed in the plains; leopard and pig are still hunted. Smaller game hunted and eaten include antelope and monkeys of all kinds: almost any kind of meat was eaten, except that of hyena, jackal, and

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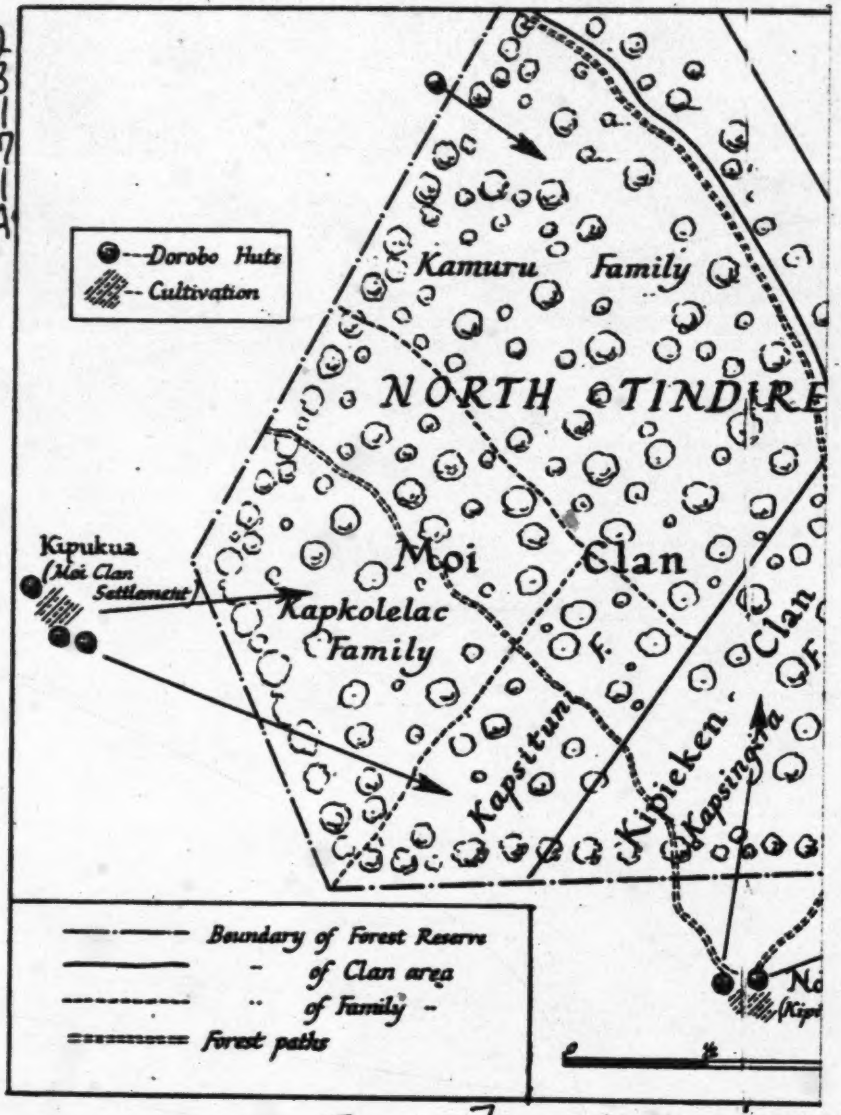

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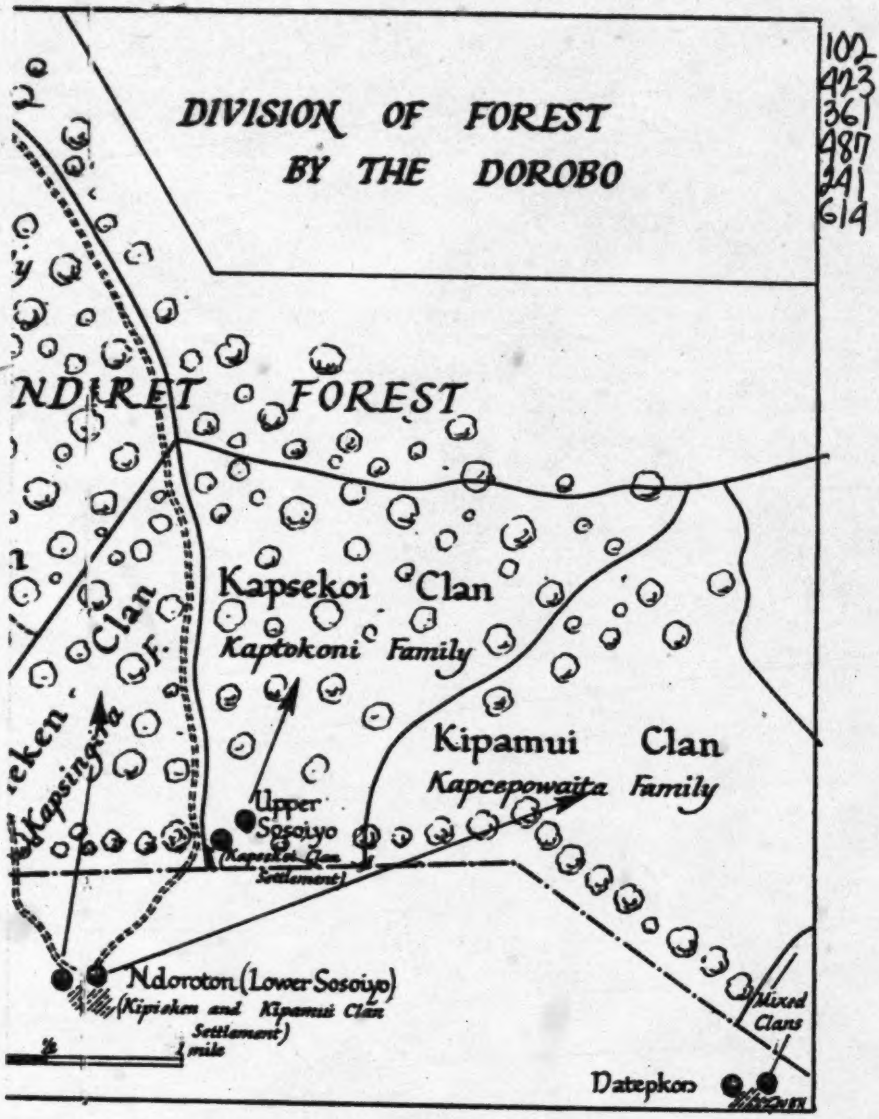

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other scavengers. Nowadays, all hunting activities are carried on illegally with the risk of being punished if caught by the police.

Weapons are the bow and poisoned arrows carried in a quiver. Knives are used to skin game and to make springes. Spears have never been used. The Dorobo used to have hunting dogs, but in the North Tindiret Forest the breed seems to have died out, though it existed in 1927. They have two kinds of trap: (i) The pit trap, *nguret*, formerly used for buffalo, consisting of a pit 8 ft. long, 3 ft. wide, and 6 ft. deep, with wooden spikes set in the bottom. (ii) The springe or snare, *poronet*, which consists, briefly, of a springy stick bent over, with a noose attached to it connected with a platform: the arrangement is such that when an animal treads on the platform its head enters the noose, and the pressure on the platform releases the springy stick, which flies up, tightening the noose, and holding the animal suspended. Such traps can be made in less than ten minutes. This type is used chiefly to catch antelopes, but leopards have been caught in them. Cross-bar traps with a drop-spear were not used by the Kipkurerek Dorobo.

The only hunting taboo recorded is that the night before he goes out hunting a man must abstain from sexual intercourse. This does not apply to the setting of traps.

As regards land rights, the forest was divided into districts, *koret*, pl. *korosuek*, and in his district each man had an hereditary block of land in which he hunted, set traps, kept his honey-barrels, and collected wild food. Occupation rights were recognized by public opinion, and trespass on a man's forest area, i.e., deliberate entry in order to start hunting without permission or the promise of a piece of meat, might result in the trespasser's death at the hands of the owner, who would then have to pay compensation for homicide. Theft of game from a trap is said never to have occurred, not only because the thief might be killed, but because his belly would swell to a great size and he would die after eating meat stolen from a trap.

Bees

Honey is to the Dorobo what milk is to the Nandi: it is "sacred," and its supply must be protected by the observance of taboos. Fruit and blood must not be eaten on the same day as honey (though meat may be eaten); when a comb is emptied, it must be carefully hidden in the undergrowth; and after eating honey a Dorobo cleans his hands in earth, not (like the Nandi) by wiping them with leaves.

The Dorobo recognize four varieties of bee: *sekemik*, the honey-producing kind; *imeiik*, solitary bees which live in trees; *kosomek*, earth bees, which live in the ground; and *kiptulonik*, mason bees, which live in cells made of earth and particles of stone cemented together by their own saliva. The Dorobo divide the honey-bees, *sekemik*, into three kinds: the queen, *kamet ap sekemik*, "the mother of the bees"; the workers, called simply *sekemik*, considered to be males, which make honey by eating the "sap" (*pek*) of flowers and then vomiting it into the empty honey-combs; and the drones, *kapurenik*, considered to be idle females which do nothing useful.

Hives or honey-barrels (*pasanet*) are made either of slats of wood tied together, with circular wooden end-pieces; or of the two halves of a piece of log split longitudinally and tied together. They are set in trees, and when a new hive is put up, the owner calls the bees, in a high-pitched tone, to come and occupy it: "Bees, bees, from all the country, come here now, and pour in honey, pour in honey." Bees are said to recognize their owners by their body-smell, and do not sting them when taking honey. Certainly taking honey does not appear to be a painful or dangerous process to the Dorobo owner. Theft of honey from a barrel is considered very low, and a man might kill a thief, though he would have to pay compensation for homicide.

Honey is an important article in Dorobo economy: it is eaten as food, made into an intoxicant, used for ritual purification, and it forms an article of commerce.

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Agriculture

The Dorobo began to cultivate in a small way about 30 years ago (or even a little earlier) and at first they grew only eleusine. Though their inclinations were to become cattle-owners, conditions were unfavourable to the development of cattle-breeding as a primary activity and they have been forced to make agriculture a serious business; for the methods, implements, and even the seed used in this, they have been indebted to the Nandi.

Land

Those who live in A and B domicile categories (with whom alone we are concerned here) cultivate small plots in the open land which surrounds the forest. They have no rights of tenure, except the temporary ones acquired, according to Kenya law, if they live there as squatters under the Resident Native Labourers Ordinance. Their plots, *imbaret*, pl. *imbaroonik*, range in size from one acre divided into four individual holdings, to half an acre divided into four holdings; in other cases, plots of a quarter to one-fifth of an acre worked by one person. All plots are fenced, and sometimes a living-hut is built inside the fenced area; occasionally it was found that elderly Dorobo were allowed by Nandi squatters to have a little piece of their cultivated land to work.

European farmers in the district, with whom the Dorobo land question was discussed, seemed not unwilling to let the Dorobo live unmolested on their land provided they gave no trouble, but the government authorities thought otherwise, and the position of a Dorobo who did not choose to become a squatter in order to live on what he considered his own land was thus precarious.

Cultivation Methods and Crops

Two main crops are grown, eleusine, *paish*, and maize, *ipandek*. Millet had not been grown by 1940, though they bought it from the Nandi. Sweet potatoes, *ropoonik*, are sometimes grown in very limited quantities. Implements are the heart-shaped hoe and the panga or cutlass, both obtained from the Nandi. They have also small axes, *ndolut*, and knives, *rotuet* or *cambolust*.

The growing of crops is regulated by the dry and wet seasons, *muainonik*, from October to March, and *iwotet*, from April to September. The land is prepared between January and April, and planted in April or May according to the rain. Cultivation follows the Nandi method, with paring and burning of new land. The seed of eleusine and maize is bought from the Nandi, usually from squatters living nearby. Maize and eleusine are planted together in the same plot, though potatoes are generally grown separately. Eleusine is reaped in the Nandi manner by cutting off the heads; maize is picked by hand. Granaries of Nandi type are sometimes made, but are seldom needed, as the yields are so small that the loft of a hut can generally hold all that is not eaten on the field (as is often the case with maize). Cereals are roughly ground on slabs of granite in the Nandi manner.

Food

Food in the old days consisted mainly of meat supplemented by honey, wild vegetables, and grain bought by exchange from the Nandi. The food supply is now based on their own agricultural produce, supplemented by milk when they have any, and by certain other foods when they can be got. Meat is still obtained by trapping, though seldom by hunting; it includes the flesh of antelopes, monkeys, pigs, and leopards. Honey is got, as already described, from honey-barrels. Wild food, collected in the forest, includes fruit of the *momoniat* (*rubus rigidus*), *lemeiyuet* (*ximenia americana*), and *sasuriet* (*musa ensete*, wild banana), the sap of the *sasuriet*, and leaves of nettle, *siuot*.

Intoxicating drink is of two kinds: the Dorobo honey-wine, *kiphelinik* or *kumik ap lo*, made from honey, and fermented with the long seed-pods of the "sausage

1;Huntingford E-4, 5 (1938-1939) 1953 FL6 Dorobo FL6

[962] [273] tree," *rotinuet* (*higelia æthiopica*); and *maiyah*, eleusine beer, made, though seldom, in the Nandi way. They also drink a mixture of honey and water called *lokomsh*.

Trade and Exchange

439 The inability of the Dorobo to produce many of the things they need has led to the development of a system of exchange with the Nandi, who till recently were [648] almost the only people with whom they had dealings. Relations between Dorobo and Nandi have been such that, though maintaining their complete independence, [177] the Dorobo have not only obtained goods by trade, but have acquired and assimilated much Nandi culture, including language, clan-names, agriculture, and many material features like dress and ornaments. Their relations are in general friendly, for the Nandi like honey and furs which they get most easily from the Dorobo, and [582] there has been an increasing number of marriages of Dorobo men with Nandi women, as well as of Dorobo women with Nandi men. But neither side takes liberties with the other: the Dorobo fear the physical superiority of the Nandi, and the Nandi [181] fear the close-to-nature life of the Dorobo, as well as a certain mystical force as [186] rain-makers which they attribute to them.

From the Nandi the Dorobo get objects of iron, pottery, beads, tobacco, cattle (see below, p. 61), and the seed of cereals for planting. The Nandi get skins and [437] honey from the Dorobo. There are no special places for trade, but the Dorobo go to the nearest smith or potter or other person who can supply them, and make their bargains. This means a journey into the Nandi Land Unit, but other things can be got from the nearest friendly Nandi. The exchange values in 1939 were:

[435]
1 axe for 1 bagful of honey;
1 bundle of tobacco (about 1 lb.) for 1 bagful of honey;
1 arrowhead for 1 gourd full of honey;
1s. worth of trade beads for a gourd full of honey;
1 knife for a day's weeding in the smith's garden;
1 large earthenware pot for 1 large prepared buck skin (usually bush-buck)
1 small earthenware pot for 1 small prepared buck skin (usually duiker);
2 baskets of seed for planting for 1 new basket.

[415] The bag, *motoket*, is made of skin and measures about 8 ins. by 7 ins.; the gourd is about 10 ins. long; the large pot is about 20 ins. high, the small pot about 10 ins. high; and the basket is about 6 ins. deep and 6 ins. wide.

Cattle

231 The Dorobo interest in cattle is probably due to their long contact with the Nandi; but though they desire cattle, they have not the land for them. Yet they [177] have speculated about cattle inheritance, and by 1939 had worked out theoretical rules which they had scarcely had opportunities of testing. When they were evicted [648] from the forest in 1937 they were officially credited with about 2,000 head of cattle; but no census of either people or stock appears to have been made in preparation for this event, and most of these cattle did not belong to real Dorobo. In 1938–9 the numbers of stock which I counted during the compilation of my census were:

	Cattle	Goats	Dogs
Koret of Kipkorom ..	25	15	4
Koret of Sosoiyo ..	54	19	3
Koret of Kelpui	11	0	0
	90	34	7

[171] Methods of cattle-management are based on those of the Nandi.

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Means by which the Dorobo can acquire stock are: (1) By bridewealth: when a Nandi marries a Dorobo girl, her father gets the normal Nandi payment of one cow, one ox, and a varying number of goats. (When a Dorobo man marries a Nandi girl he has to find somehow the same amount of cattle.) (2) By gift exchange: a Nandi makes friends with a Dorobo, mainly to get honey, and after the first step towards friendship has been taken, the Dorobo gives him some. Later the Nandi gives a goat, and the way is thus paved for the exchange of cattle. This exchange is independent of the honey, which is given by the Dorobo from time to time. This process of acquiring cattle is of course a form of payment, but it is purchase under the peculiar conditions of forming a friendship by a previous exchange of gifts, for the Nandi do not readily part with their cattle, and it is necessary to lead up to the final stage by a preparatory exchange of other things. So far the Nandi have been willing to exchange male stock only in this way; to get cows the Dorobo have had to rely on bridewealth. (3) The Nandi will sell goats for cash, but not (at least up to 1939) cattle. The Dorobo do not seem to want sheep; they had none in 1939, nor when I first knew them in 1927.

Inheritance

The general rule is that when a man dies, his goods are kept by his wife for handing over to his children if they are small, or they pass straight to them if grown up. When a man has neither wife nor children, his heirs are his brothers, his father's brothers' sons, or his mother's brothers' sons. Women do not inherit stock. Land rights in the forest pass to the eldest son, or to a brother, or to one of the relatives termed *macokor* (see below, p. 62). Weapons are left to a brother, to a *macokor*, or to a clansman. Dogs are left to sons, or else to a brother or *macokor*. Goats are divided proportionately between sons, or pass to a brother or *macokor*. The proportion is roughly as follows, assuming that a man left seven goats and three sons: to eldest son, three; to second son, two; to youngest son, one; to his wife, one, this and its offspring going eventually to the youngest son. The theoretical division of cattle is approximately thus: to eldest son, two; to other sons, one each; to wife, one, which reverts to the youngest son.

Division of Labour

Everything connected with hunting, bees, and weapons is done by men; domestic work by women. The main occupations are divided thus:

Men:	Women:
Making fire.	Building houses.
Hunting.	Collecting vegetable food.
Trapping.	Getting water and firewood.
Putting meat on to cook.	Looking after meat cooking.
Making honey-barrels.	Cooking other food.
Collecting honey.	Milking when there are cows.
Making weapons.	Making baskets.
Trading with the Nandi.	Preparing skins.
Getting coloured earth.	Making clothes, etc.
Cutting wood.	Care of the children.
Making fences.	Sweeping huts.
Preliminary heavy work in the *imbaret*.	Cultivation, all stages.

Children of both sexes help in weeding and herding stock; girls help with the housework and milking, though boys are allowed to milk till they are circumcised. This division is followed strictly with regard to the first nine male activities; but with the last three there is some overlapping; and the essential domestic work and cultivation are often done by men, especially when they are unmarried or live quite alone.

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SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

Social Organization

Life Cycle

561 [304] [582] [880] [589]

Dorobo men pass through three stages: *getik*, uncircumcised boys; *murvaik*, circumcised men; and *apaiisiek*, elders. Boys are circumcised between the ages of 15 and 18 years, and may marry at any time after circumcision when their circumstances allow. Some men in fact never marry at all, but live alone, getting occasional help from women in the settlement, and depending for sexual satisfaction on surreptitious affairs with wives of age-mates. Women are first *tipik*, girls; then *yosotik*, married women; and finally, when they begin to look old, *engitokisiek*, old women. Girls marry soon after they have been circumcised.

Kinship and Behaviour

602 [171]

The existing Dorobo relationship system, *tiliet*, is structurally similar to that of the Nandi, and uses a number of Nandi terms; but it is less regular and includes in the *tiliet* a larger number of persons than does the Nandi. Moreover, the collective term *macokor* (which I did not find in use as a true relationship term in Nandi) is used by the Dorobo as the proper term for a number of people terminologically differentiated by the Nandi.

601

Within the *tiliet* the chief terms are: In the third ascending generation, all males are *macokor* and all females *makikat;* in the second ascending generation, all males are *kuko* or *akui* and all females *koko*.

In the first ascending generation, the terms are: *papa* = father, father's brothers, and mother's sister's husband; *eiyo* = mother, mother's sisters, and father's brother's wife; *pukot* = father's sister; *konyit* = father's sister's husband; *mama* = mother's brother and his wife. Terms used by women are *sindet* = father's sister and father's brother's wife; *apulaiyo* = mother's brother; *eiyo* = mother's brother's wife; and *konyit* = mother's sister's husband.

In a man's own generation, his brothers, sisters, and mother's sister's son and daughter are *kesenda;* mother's brother's son and daughter, *mama;* and the son and daughter of his father's brother and father's sister are *macokor*. Women's terms which differ from these are: *apulaiyo* = mother's brother's son and daughter; *eiyo* = mother's sister's son and daughter.

In the first descending generation, *apaa* includes son, daughter, brother's son and daughter; *mama*, sister's son and daughter, and mother's brother's son and daughter; *macokor*, father's brother's children's children, and father's sister's children's children. In the second descending generation, both sexes are *akui*, except mother's brother's children's children's children, which are *mama;* and mother's sister's children's children's children, *kesenda*.

Among affines, wife's father is *pamoyo;* wife's mother, *poker;* wife's brother, *konyit* and his wife, *poker;* wife's sister *pukot* and her husband, *kipukotiet;* wife's brother's son and wife's sister's son, *apaa;* wife's brother's daughter and wife's sister's daughter, *pakuo*. Husband's father is *pakuo* and his mother, *poker;* husband's brother *konyit* and his wife, *sindet;* husband's sister, *kamati* and her husband, *poker;* husband's brother's children, *lakuet;* and husband's sister's children, *apulaiyo*.

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In the *tiliet* it is the *father's brother* who stands out and occupies the special place in family life that the mother's brother does among the Nandi; not a few Dorobo did not know their mother's brother's name. Owing to the nature of Dorobo life, the father's brother is continually in contact with his brother's children, and his relations with his nephews are even closer than those of the Nandi *mama* with his nephews.

l: Huntingford E-4, 5 (1938-1939) 1953 FL6 Dorobo FL6

A striking difference between the Dorobo and Nandi systems is that whereas Nandi may not marry any person in the *tiliet*, the Dorobo were insistent that a man might marry his father's sister's daughter's daughter, the girl whom he calls *macokor*, a person definitely in the *tiliet*. This type of marriage does not seem to occur now; but did in the past. Marriage with a wife's sister is considered objectionable.

Behaviour patterns may be summed up in a statement made by a Dorobo that " a man does not use bad language to his father, though his father may beat him as a child, nor does he use bad language to his father's brother; he does not speak of dirty things, nor of sexual matters, to his mother and his mother's sister, for it is bad to do so; but we are all on terms of friendliness and ' clean fun.' " Generally speaking, seniority is a matter of age, except with respect to the father's brother. Between a man and members of his own generation considerable latitude is allowed; but elders must always be shown respect. Where the claims of relatives are concerned, the amount of contact is important, for even a close relative who lives a long way off and is seldom seen cannot expect and will not receive so much respect as one who lives nearby and is well known. On a husband's part, there should be complete avoidance of his wife's mother, though this may be relaxed by degrees as he gets older; conversation with the wife's father should be limited to greetings.

Pre-marital Sex-life

Owing to the small number of Dorobo and the consequent shortage of women for wives, men have little in the way of pre-marital sex-life; and if a man does manage to acquire a lover, he often marries her.

Bridewealth

This varies according to circumstances, and Dorobo statements about it are conflicting. In 1927 it was said to consist of large quantities of honey-wine and of monkey-skin caps; but in 1939 the standard was one cow (with calf if still suckling), one ox, and four goats. The number of goats varied in the recorded cases from two to six, and in one case the cattle amounted to four oxen. A man also gives his father-in-law presents of honey-wine and a fur cap or two; thus marriage is more of a drain on a man's resources than formerly.

Betrothal

A man chooses his wife himself, and arranges the preliminaries with the girl's father during two visits at which he gives him presents of honey. After the second visit the father calls the clan council together and publicly gives his consent to the marriage.

Marriage

The marriage ceremonies are conducted by an elder known for the time as *patum*, who brings the bride to her future husband's home, where the guests are already assembled feasting. The girl enters the hut in which the ceremony is to take place, and in the presence of witnesses the *patum* gives her to the man, saying, *Keipuncin cicoto*, " you now belong to this man." He then binds some *sekutiet* grass on the man's right wrist, and an old woman binds some of the same on the girl's right wrist. They are now married. The *patum* then sets up an erection of *sekutiet* grass called *tumdo* which is smeared over with cow-dung; this the wife has to knock down and tread upon. After this, the pair are left alone, and the marriage is consummated. Next day the *tumdo* is trodden into the floor and plastered over with cow-dung, for it must not be seen. The pair are then shaved, he by the *patum*, she by the old woman, and the hair is buried in cow-dung under an erection of sticks called *koroniot*, which is set up in great secrecy by the *patum*. It is essential

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585 [237] [591] that cow-dung be used for both the *tumdo* and *horosiot*, and if there are no cattle in the bridegroom's settlement it must be procured from somewhere else. Marriage is patrilocal.

Marriage with Nandi

582 C48 Eighteen marriages were recorded in genealogies between Dorobo and Nandi or members of the Nandi group:

Dorobo and Nandi women:	8	Dorobo and Nandi men:	10
Dorobo and Keyo women:	1	Dorobo and Keyo men:	1
Dorobo and Terik women:	1		

Marriage of Dorobo women to outsiders seems to be due to the poverty of the Dorobo, which in these cases would have meant that the women would have remained unmarried; such marriages also mean the accession of stock to the Dorobo.

Polygyny

595 [587] Although there is no objection to polygyny, Dorobo seldom have the means of acquiring more than one wife at a time, though several cases occurred of re-marriage after a wife's death or desertion. In one genealogy a woman had no less than four successive husbands, none of them her husband's brother, and her only issue was one daughter.

Re-marriage of Widows

587 Unlike the Nandi, the Dorobo recognize the re-marriage of widows in the normal manner on payment of bridewealth to their fathers, brothers, or other representatives; it is, however, unusual. Widows normally live with their husband's brothers, return to their parents, or else live alone.

Divorce

586 Divorce is rare, and is of one kind only—permanent. The husband can claim the return of the bridewealth. But a wife who has borne a child cannot be divorced for any cause whatsoever.

Birth

843 [834] 844 846 862 845 [224] Intercourse between husband and wife stops at the fourth or fifth month of pregnancy, and is not resumed till the child is about six months old. Birth takes place in the husband's hut, the husband going to live elsewhere nearby. The wife is attended by a midwife, *ngaitoyonit*, and her mother is present if possible. She stays in the hut for six or seven days after the birth, and the child's body must be kept covered for several weeks, even the father being allowed to see only its face. The mother must be purified by her husband, who kills a goat (which he must acquire somehow if he has none of his own) and rubs the fat and undigested grass (*eiyat*) from the stomach on her face, breasts, and belly. Children are weaned at the age of about a year. Twins are not liked, and the mother's ritual uncleanness caused by their birth must be removed by the killing of a goat which is eaten by the mother and her women friends. The Dorobo say that if a man has set a trap at the time when his wife bears twins, the trap will never again catch an animal.

553 [796] [883] Children receive their first name, the spirit-name, soon after birth; as among the Nandi, this name is not used, but links the child with a protecting spirit. The second or principal name is given before the child can walk, at the time when it is first given solid food, and is called "porridge name" in imitation of the Nandi custom. Children may also be given nicknames which often refer to some physical peculiarity. After circumcision, boys become *Arap*, son of, eldest sons taking their

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patronymic from their father's porridge name. Younger sons generally take their patronymic from the father's nickname, or else from some circumstance in their own lives.

Circumcision

Boys are circumcised at the same intervals as the Nandi, and the Dorobo keep watch for the opening of the Nandi circumcision. Occasionally boys are circumcised in Nandi with other Nandi boys, but more often in the forest, as in the circumcision of 1926–30. Sometimes a Dorobo acts as operator for the Nandi. The whole procedure of circumcision (*tum*) is identical with that of the Nandi. Girls undergo the operation of clitoridectomy whenever there are enough ready to be done, and not at any stated intervals.

Age-sets

The Dorobo have borrowed the whole age-set system from the Nandi, and it works exactly as among the Nandi, with the same set-names and 15-year intervals synchronized with those of the Nandi. The reader may therefore be referred to the account of the Nandi system, p. 31. A slight difference in the sub-divisions called *mat* may be noted: the Dorobo have only three, called *Coginich*, the senior; *Taparik*[1] or *Kipalkonyek*, the middle; and *Ruwakanik* or *Kiptoiinik*, the junior. A more significant difference is that the sets have no military or political force, for the Dorobo are not fighters, and the practical effect of the system is to introduce further behaviour patterns, as well as to modify the traditional rules of hospitality; for while no Dorobo would refuse to shelter one of his own horde, the degree of hospitality varies according to the age-set situation.

Political Structure

Land Divisions

The Dorobo live mainly in clan settlements divided between a number of districts or parishes (*korosuek*, sing. *koret*). Till about 1930 these settlements were in small clearings inside the forest; after 1937 they were spread round the outer edge of the forest.

The Clan

The clan, *oret*, is an exogamous patrilineal group with a name and a totem, *tiond ap oret*, the animal of the clan. The existence of eight clans is attested by genealogies and the census; three others are reputed to exist or to have existed, though none occurred in my records; they were, however, mentioned to me in 1927 as well as in 1938–9. Each of these clans has one totem, except Moi which has three, one of which it shares with another clan; it is not the totem which is important, but the group itself, the clan being a social group, not a group of people mystically related through their totem. The emphasis is therefore on the clan name and not on the animal, though marriage, nevertheless, is forbidden within the clan. An exception to this rule is found in the case of Moi, where intermarriage is allowed between people of different totems, an anomalous feature due possibly to the influence of the Nandi, among whom Moi marriages are common between people of different totems. (See p. 27.) There seem to be no restrictions either on marriage between clans (as among the Nandi), or on killing or eating the clan animal, which suggests that originally the Dorobo clans were non-totemic, and that their present totemism is a feature borrowed from the Nandi along with the clan names, which except for one of the reputed clans are all Nandi.

[1] The Nandi occasionally use *taparik* for this *mat*; it is a Nandi word meaning "the turves."

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TABLE OF CLANS

Clan name	Corresponding Nandi name, used also by Dorobo	Source	Dorobo totem
Kapeebei *	Kipkobee Moi	Nandi clan	crested crane
Moi *	Moi	Nandi clan	crested crane buffalo small red bird
Kipieken *	Kipieken	Nandi clan	baboon
Kipamui *	Kipamui	Nandi clan	duiker
Kapii *	Kipsirkoi	Nandi clan	bush pig
Toiyoi *	Toiyoi	Nandi clan	rain
Korapor *	Tungo	Nandi clan	hyena
Talai *	Talai	Nandi clan	lion

The three reputed clans are: Kipongoi,* corresponding to the Nandi Kamwaiks, totem partridge; Kipasiso,* corresponding to the Nandi Kipasiso, totem the sun; and Koqoc, apparently a Dorobo name, totem snake.

(All names marked * are of *Nandi* origin.)

[671] [673] The clan is the basis of political organization, and people tend to live in clan settlements under the control of a clan council. This council consists of all the old men of the clan. People meet at the house of a clansman who, upon notice being given to him, prepares honey-wine or beer, for the business of the council is done in an informal way with a jar of honey-wine as if it were a social gathering, which in a sense it is. Business is done first and the drinking follows. The council deals with clan matters, including disputes between clansmen, boundaries of hunting areas, [694] homicide of a clansfellow, incest, and the preliminary arrangements when a clansman has killed a member of another clan. Disputes are settled by discussion, and the result is announced by the council leader, *kiruokindet*, who is not necessarily the [554] oldest member of the clan, but someone fairly senior who acquires his position in much the same way as does the Nandi *poiyot ap kokuet* (p. 32).

The Koret

63 60 [623] Superimposed on the clan areas is a system of districts (*korosuek*, sing. *koret*) possibly due to Nandi influence. Each district includes several clan settlements, and has a council which is formed of the elders and circumcised men of all the clan settlements within it; the council sits under a tree (there are no special council trees) in an open space from which the bush has been cleared. The function of the *koret* council is to handle inter-clan affairs. It has a leader, also known as *kiruokindet*, whose position and duties resemble those of the leader of the clan council, and he acquires his office in the same way. There was no chief of the horde.

The forest is divided into nine *korosuek*, named (from north to south), Cepurur, Kelpui, Sirua, Kipkorom, Sosoiyo, Meteitei, Mokopic, Puret, and Sanalo. In 1930 only three of these were occupied: Kelpui, Kipkorom, and Sosoiyo (which had by then been amalgamated with Meteitei).

Legal Sanctions

681 Crimes against which primary sanctions are directed include incest, witchcraft, and disobedience to the council. Secondary sanctions deal with trespass, theft, homi-

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cide, adultery, and assault. In the first category, incest is punished under the authority of the clan council: the man is beaten, his hut burnt, his honey-barrels destroyed; the woman also is beaten. Witches might be killed under authority of the *koret* council. In cases of persistent disobedience to the council, the elders could call upon two or three men to force the offender, by moral and physical persuasion, to mend his ways. Of offences in the second category, trespass has already been mentioned (p. 58). Theft, when not dealt with summarily, can be brought to the *koret* council, which can order payment of compensation. A man accused of stealing food may say, "If I am a thief, may this grass eat me," and place a blade of grass between his teeth. Adultery might be punished by the injured husband, who, if he killed the offender, had to pay blood-cattle. If a man incapacitates another by assaulting him, he must feed him till he recovers. Homicide of a Dorobo of another clan, though not involving primary sanctions, was a serious offence because it meant that the murderer had to get cattle in order to pay compensation. The usual number was nine head of cattle, though when the murderer was a very poor man living alone the number might be reduced. The kind of cattle (male or female) did not matter. The murderer had to provide as many as he could, from his own herd if he had one, or by exchange from the Nandi, or by any other means, including theft. The deficiency had to be made up by his fellow-clansmen.

Summary

The Dorobo horde consists of a loosely integrated group of districts held together partly by the feeling that they are all Dorobo, but much more by the clan ties which cut across the district boundaries. The clan is therefore one of the chief institutions in the life of the Dorobo.

MAIN CULTURAL FEATURES

Crafts

Housing

(*a*) Forest type: the *kocongei*, in use as late as 1927, was a framework of sticks bent over to form an oblong, dome-shaped structure, covered on the outside with banana leaves and leaves of trees; height, 6 ft.; length, 11 ft.; width, 7 ft. (*b*) New types: the *keriet* has a circular wall about 5 ft. high plastered with mud, and an almost flat thatched roof supported by a centre post; the *kot* is a hut of ordinary Nandi type, the walls of which are occasionally left unplastered.

Settlements in the forest, consisting of three or four *kocongei* huts, were situated in clearings just big enough to hold the huts, and were approached by concealed paths which branched in a bewildering manner that made it impossible to find them without a guide. Settlements outside the forest are arranged in small groups usually close to the cultivated land.

Dress and Ornaments

Clothing is made largely from the skins of wild animals, and the forms are mainly copied from those of the Nandi, as are most of the ornaments, which include, among other things, iron wire armlets and leglets, necklaces, and married women's ear-rings (*taok*). The ear-lobes are pierced and elongated (sometimes getting torn in the forest), and a small hole is bored in the top of the ear. Some but not all remove the two lower middle incisors. Hair is allowed to grow to a length of about 2 ins., when it is sometimes covered with a bladder cap, and sometimes dressed with red earth and fat. Occasionally a man has his hair done in pigtails like the Nandi.

Tools and Weapons

Axes and knives are obtained from Nandi smiths, the Dorobo making the wooden handles. Needles are made from old nails and bits of wire which the Dorobo

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412 find lying about on the farms. The only weapon is the bow, *keyaqde*, which the
411 Dorobo make themselves from the *kuriot* tree (*Ficalhoa* sp.); it is about 5 ft. long, and
[439] the bowstring, *inot*, is made from gut of the giant pig, *tumde*. Arrow-shafts are
278 made from the *koromandet* and *masaile* trees, or from bamboo, *ossoiyat*; arrow-
heads are bought from the Nandi, and are of the Nandi patterns. Arrows are carried
in quivers made of hide. Arrow poison is made from the *keliot* bush (*acocanthera Schimperi*).

Baskets

415 Making baskets, *kerepet*, is a common occupation of Dorobo women. They are
[962] made from fibre of the *phœnix reclinata* palm, *soniot*, and sewn with bast made from
[824] a plant called *taparuriot*. The technique is a spiral foundation with a flat then
385 gradually ascending coil, of the simple over-sewn type and bee-skep variety, the
stitches being spaced out and not close together.

Miscellaneous

317 Salt used to be made from the ashes of the plant *tepengwet* (*amilia integrifolia*).
[263] Red and white earth is found near Timboroa on the east of the Dorobo country, and
[439] men go in parties of four or five to dig it, carrying home the earth in large leather
[302] bags, mainly in order to sell it to the Nandi who, in 1939, gave them 2s. a bag.
415 Red earth, *erokoit*, is mixed with fat or simsim oil for rubbing on the hair; white
480 earth, *eworiot*, has magico-religious uses. For carrying a number of small objects a carrying-net called *lekuelet* is used; it is made of a pair of oval rims 3 ft. 6 ins. long with pieces of liana stretched across them, somewhat resembling a pair of handleless tennis rackets. These are sometimes used by the Nandi.

Ritual and Beliefs

Religion

776 *Asista*, the sun, is recognized as a being that can supply or withhold the needs of people: *Asis, ipiiyec panyeh*, "*Asis*, fill us with meat," is a common prayer. Some say that *Araus* the moon is his sister, others that she is his mother. Besides *Asis*, it is believed that there is a being called *Ilet*, the thunder, who produces rain, and "the rainbow is his arm which draws up water for him." The Dorobo also believe in spirits, good and bad, both of which are called *cesowiloi*, a word which includes the *oiik* (ancestral spirits) and *masambuanik* (evil spirits) of the Nandi. The
775 ancestral spirits have the same significance and functions as those of the Nandi, and though they punish the living for doing evil, they are otherwise friendly and visit the living, travelling in the bodies of snakes, both to see their people and to get food in the form of *lokomek* (honey and water); spirit-snakes should not be killed.

Divination

780 The Dorobo appear to have no diviners of their own, and when they have
698 recourse to divination, as in cases of illness or witchcraft, they go to Nandi diviners
of the type called *sakeyuot*, by whom they are charged a small fee. The people
759 called *orkoiyot* (pl. *orkoiik*) among the Dorobo are no more than leeches or physicians who prepare healing medicines from trees and plants. Although the Dorobo have a
789 reputation among other tribes as powerful rain-makers, they themselves say that they have no rain-makers, which is probably true.

Death and Burial

764 Very old men and women are buried in narrow holes about 5 ft. deep in which the bodies are laid full length wearing their clothes; one year after an old man's death his children plant a branch of *makupcot* (*dracæna* sp.) on his grave and let it grow. Other people are laid out for the hyenas, both sexes on the right side with

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legs straight and hands crossed on the breast. Babies are also laid out for the hyenas, though if there is a dung-heap, they are buried there.

Witchcraft

Witches, *pesik* (defined as among the Nandi, p. 39), may be of either sex; females are said to be more common, though in 1939 the Dorobo said there were no witches at all in the three districts of Kapsoi, Kipkoreon, and Soudan, and certainly no trace of witchcraft was encountered. Formerly, in cases of witchcraft where the witch's identity was unknown, the Dorobo went to a Nandi diviner, *oskoyot*, and on her identity becoming known the witch was required to sit the victim on the fore, breast, and belly with the fat of a she-goat. If she refused, she was tied to a tree by a thong drawn tightly round her forehead and flogged till she agreed.

Affinity with Wild Animals

Possessing a "hunting outlook," the attitude of the Dorobo to wild animals is unlike that of the Africans to whom hunting is at most of secondary importance. They seem to be closer to the wild life round them, perhaps because they are wild men themselves. The conversation of Dorobo going through the forest turns quickly to the wild life there, for they have what they and the Nandi call *emisit*, "affinity," with the beasts of the forest. This was described in a text, in which a Dorobo said: "The Dorobo know the speech of all the animals, and they like to see the animals. The animals are not bad, for we and they all dwell in the forest together. The intelligence of animals is not like that of people, but it is not very different, for animals also are intelligent. All animals of the forest are alike, though we eat some and not others, because we the Dorobo and they the animals all live side by side in the forest."

Musical Instruments

The Dorobo have no musical instruments, and they seldom sing or dance. They used to have water-buck horns which were blown to call people together in the forest.

THE AKAMBA OF KENYA (AKAMBA)

History

The group identified by Lambert as living at Kambu on top of the escarpment, on the edge of the Forest Reserve 10 miles north of Limuru, is first found on Kilima in September 1911.[1] It was seen by Thomson in 1883 at the place known to the Kamba as Mwanza (" place of lookout "), where, he says, a Kamba village was established for selling land bought from the Kikuyu to the Masai and the Kikuyu.[2] This group is part of the Kikuyu Di-nde who occupied the land before the Kikuyu came. The process by which the Di-nde land completely lost their land by 1902 when Dundas passed through is summed up by the Kenya Land Commission as one " partly of alliance and partnership ; all partly of adoption and absorption, partly of payment, and largely of force and dishonesty."[3]

Organization

There are no chiefs, control being in the hands of a council of elders, with a leading elder called Mwandiki, as among the Kikuyuand. Marriage is purchased, and descent patrilineal. Polygyny is permitted. Boys are circumcised, and girls are subjected to clitoridectomy. There appears to be some sort of age-set system, but Lambert's statement is not very clear on this point.

There are said to be nine clans, with Kamba-looking names beginning with the prefix kya- (which does not imply exclusiveness, but simply means " group of "). These clans are sometimes referred to by Masai clan names, or even by Kikuyu clan names. The word for clan is *ai-ghanzi*, derived from the Masai *ai-ghata*, " clan," and *nzi*, as Lambert suggests, from *ai-ghata*, which means not " plain," but " side path."

Religion

A so-called supreme being called *Ywa*[4] is recognized, and the elements describing ancestral spirits as " active mediators " of a benign regime the existence of an evildoer cult.

Sources: W. S. Lambert, *The system of land tenure in the Kikuyu Land Unit, Part I. History of the tribal occupation of the land*, pp. 81, 86.

[1] MS.M1, p. 9
[2] *Through Masai Land*, 1887, p. 368
[3] Kenya Land Commission, Report, 1933, p. 46
[4] = Masai *ngai*, " deity."

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